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RR DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTHEAST AND NORTHWEST CHINA,
SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 1952

[Comment: Completion of the 347-kilometer T'ien-shui--Lan-chow section of the Lung-Hai Railway shows the success of the present government in overcoming natural and human obstacles and in providing improved facilities for transporting gasoline and raw materials from the interior, and machinery and manufactured products to the interior, thus presaging vigorous industrial and economic development of the great Northwest and of the country as a whole.

Commencement of work on the construction of the Lan-chow--Sinkiang Railway coincided with the formal opening of railway service on the T'ien-shui--Lan-chow section of the Lung-Hai Railway on 1 October 1952.

Logs being sent northward in large quantities from Kwangtung may be intended for use as ties on the Lan-chow--Sinkiang line.

Tracks were re-laid on line from Chin-chow all the way to Ch'eng-te, and on branch of the above line from Yeh-pai-shou to Ch'ih-feng in Jehol province.

The designing of over 200 bridges on the first section of the Ch'eng-tu--T'ien-shui Railway, from Ch'eng-tu to Mien-yang, a distance of 118 kilometers, was completed and the work of erection was begun using the method of rolling completed spans into position on their piers as suggested by the Soviet adviser.]

BENEFITS OF T'IENT-LAN RR--Peiping, Jen-min Jih-pao, 28 Sep 52

[The following items concerning the T'ien-Lan Railway give some details of its construction and the economic value to the area it serves.]

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In 1950, the government began work on the T'ien-Lan Railway, putting some 70,000 troops to work grading the roadbed. Also an almost equally large number of civilian workers were employed. During the early stages, the work was divided into a number of projects or tasks and contracted out to commercial contractors. This system, having been found slow and unsatisfactory, was abandoned later and the staff of the Engineering Bureau undertook to carry out the work directly under their own management and supervision. The chief of the Engineering Bureau of the Northwest Railways is Wang Shih-t'ai /also one of the two Vice-Ministers of Railways/.

Among the obstacles encountered with construction were the deeply eroded gullies peculiar to the loess soil region of Northwest China, and the lack of potable water or water suitable for mixing concrete in a 100-kilometer-broad area between Lung-hsi and Ting-hsi. For work in this area, water, vegetables, and fuel all had to be brought in from considerable distances, as far away as Pao-chi and Sian.

The length of track between T'ien-shui and Lan-chou is 347 kilometers; including sidings and tracks at stations, a total of 402 kilometers of track was laid. Tunnels on the line aggregate more than 10 kilometers. There are more than 1,000 bridges and culverts, 60 of which occupy an aggregate length of 4 kilometers. More than 280,000 cubic meters of concrete were poured.

The economic value of the line is incalculable, as may be judged by such considerations as follows: Coal, of which there are abundant reserves in Kansu, costs twice as much to mine in places inaccessible by rail because of lack of mine machinery. Wheat costs twice as much in Lan-chou as it does in Sian. Before the construction of the railway beyond Pao-chi, the petroleum and gasoline produced at Yu-men in northwestern Kansu had to be brought out by motor trucks which consumed on the average one fourth of their load before it reached the consumers. Great savings will result now that the railway has reached Lan-chou. The aviation industry is one that will benefit to a significant extent. Heavy machinery can now be brought in from the coast and textile mills, tanneries, and other industrial plants can be established. Trains can carry out wool, skins, herbs, fruit, and other products of the great Northwest. With the further extension of the Lung-Hai Railway into and across Sinkiang, under the abbreviated name of the Lan-Hsin line, an immense industrial and economic development is to be expected.

CONSTRUCTION COMMENCED ON LAN-CHOU--SINKIANG RAILWAY -- Shanghai, Hsin-wen Jih-pao, 4 Oct 52

Lan-chou -- When Mao Tse-tung telegraphically congratulated the railway men in Lan-chou upon the completion of the railway from T'ien-shui to Lan-chou, and the beginning of regular train service on 1 October 1952, he challenged them to press on with the building of the Lan-chou--Sinkiang Railway /also referred to as the Lan-Hsin line/. This challenge aroused the spirits of the whole engineering staff. Yesterday's newspaper reported that while the completion of the T'ien-Lan line was being celebrated, work was already starting on the Lan-Hsin line beyond Lan-chou. We should be proud and rejoice at the bright tomorrow presaged by this tremendous project.

The route of the line is to follow the historically famous Kansu corridor to Urumchi, and then on to Chuguchak near the Sino-Soviet boundary. It is to traverse stretches of desert, a network of rivers and streams, the famous Turfan Depression which is over 200 meters below sea level, and the rugged Ch'i-lien Shan Range /the eastern spur of the T'ien Shan/. In this region, there are strange geological formations and great extremes of temperature. In view of these characteristics this area is regarded almost as an outside world.

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Wang Shih-t'ai, Vice-Minister of Railways, has characterized this project as an immense and difficult undertaking, whose accomplishment will require a severe struggle against natural conditions and a combination of political and technical skill and Sino-Soviet cooperation such as was never imagined by the reactionaries of any previous political regime. If we use the experience and confidence gained in the successful construction of the T'ien-shui--Lan-chou line, we surely shall be able to accomplish the building of the Lan-caou--Sinkiang Railway.--Ch'ih P'ing

KWANGTUNG LOGS BEING SENT TO THE NORTH -- Hong Kong, Hsing-tao Jih-pao, 14 Oct 52

(Chung-lien She) -- The China Structural Materials Company, in order to supply the needs of the Northeast and the Soviet Union, is now trying to obtain fir logs from the forested area in Lien-nan Hsien in northern Kwangtung, according to information from Shao-Kuan.

The lowest price being paid for logs at least 4 inches in diameter at the small end and 10 feet long is 20,000 yuan, and the highest price being paid is 48,000 yuan per log. The first lot to be sent contained over 190,000 logs. It is understood that the second lot had 200,000 logs.

It is possible that these logs are being sent to the Northwest for use as railway ties on the Lan-chou--Sinkiang Railway.

RR TRACK RE-LAID TO CH'ENG-TE -- Shanghai, Hsin-wen Jih-pao, 17 Oct 52

Mukden, 15 October (Hsin-hua) -- The railway tracks have been re-laid from Chin-ling-ssu to Ch'eng-te, a distance of 340 kilometers, which is the western section of the line from Chin-chou to Ch'eng-te. Rush work is in progress on the railway stations and accessory installations in preparation for the resumption of regular service at an early date. This section of the line, including bridges, was entirely destroyed by the Nationalist troops in their attack on the liberated areas in 1945. The work of restoration was begun in March 1952, and since then, parts of the line have been in irregular service as the re-laying of track progressed.

RAILS RE-LAID TO CH'IH-FENG -- New York, Hua-ch'iao Jih-pao, 13 Dec 52

Hong Kong, 7 December -- Information received from Ch'eng-te, Jehol, reports that the work of re-laying the rails on the branch line from Yeh-pai-shou to Ch'ih-feng is completed. Work was begun on this branch line 3 October 1952 by the working force which had just finished the laying of rails all the way to the city of Ch'eng-te. They were able to lay an average of about 4 kilometers of tracks per day. The length of the branch line is 144 kilometers. With the restoration of this branch, northern and southern Jehol are connected. Regular operation of trains is expected in the near future on the whole line from Chin-chou to Ch'eng-te and on its branches.

CONSTRUCTION OF BRIDGE SPANS BY SOVIET METHOD -- New York, Hua-ch'iao Jih-pao, 12 Dec 52

Hong Kong, 1 December (dispatch from Chungking) -- The engineering work on the Ch'eng-tu--T'ien-shui line is progressing under high pressure. The designing of the more than 200 large and small bridges required for the 118-kilometer section from Ch'eng-tu to Mien-yang is completed, and the work of erection of the bridges has now started. It is the intention to adopt for the erection of all the bridges on the line the progressive Soviet method which was introduced by Soviet Adviser Chi-ho-no-fu (possibly Gekhonov) and used successfully in erecting the T'ao Chiang bridge near Nei-chiang on the

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Ch'eng-tu--Chungking line. This method, as it will be used on the Ch'eng-tu--T'ien-shui line, will prove even quicker, better, and more economical than on the T'ao Chiang bridge.

The special features of this method involve the construction of the spans on the river bank and then moving them forward on rollers into position on the bridge piers. This method overcomes many natural obstacles and the difficulty of assembling and employing costly structural equipment. In the case of the T'ao Chiang bridge, the separate spans weighed about 180 tons each. Having been built in a slightly inclined position on the bank of the river, it required a tractive force of only 3 percent of their weight to draw the spans into position on their piers. This was much easier and cheaper than by the old methods which required rafts or pontoons underneath the spans to support them during erection.

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